

Amendment to the Drawings

The attached Replacement Sheet of drawings includes changes to FIG. 2. In FIG. 2, arrows and reference numerals representative of a polarization axis direction (50) and groove direction (52) have been added.

Attachment: Replacement Sheet
Annotated Sheet Showing Changes

REMARKS

By this amendment, claims 2, 3, 9 and 10 have been canceled. Claims 1, 4, 5, 8, 11 and 12 have been amended. Claims 1, 4-8 and 11-14 remain in the application. Support for the amendments to the claims can be found the specification and drawings. No new matter has been added. This application has been carefully considered in connection with the Examiner's Action. Reconsideration, and allowance of the application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

The Drawings

The drawings stand objected to because the drawings did not indicate the polarization axis direction of the reflective polarizer. By this amendment, FIG. 2 has been amended to indicate the polarization axis direction. Support for the changes can be found in the specification on page 4, lines 31-33; page 5, lines 9-11; and page 7, lines 27-31. Accordingly, objection of the drawings is now believed overcome.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. §112

Claims 5 and 12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. The rejection of claims 5 and 12 is now believed moot in view of the amendment to FIG. 2 herein. In particular, FIG. 2 has been amended to indicate the polarization axis direction and groove direction. As illustrated, the polarization axis direction is in parallel with the groove direction (i.e., corresponding to a direction of the grooves) in the reflecting prism face in the light guide. Support for the amendments can be found in the specification on page 4, lines 31-33; page 5, lines 9-11; and page 7, lines 27-31. Accordingly, the rejection of claims 5 and 12 is now believed overcome. Withdrawal of the rejection of claims 5 and 12 is requested.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. §102

Claim 1 recites: a liquid crystal display device including a liquid crystal cell having a reflective member and a surface lighting device for supplying the light to said liquid crystal cell, said surface lighting device comprising:

a light guide having a reflecting prism face and light emitting face opposed to said reflecting prism face, wherein the incident light is transmitted inside of said light guide, the transmitted light is reflected on said reflecting prism face, and the reflected light is emitted from said light emitting face to said liquid crystal cell;

light generating means for generating the light for emitting to said light guide; and

light efficiency increasing means arranged between said light guide and said light generating means, for increasing the efficiency of the light which is emitted from said light generating means to said light guide, wherein said light efficiency increasing means comprises a reflective polarizer arranged adjacent an end portion of the light guide and wherein said light efficiency increasing means further comprises a retardation plate arranged between said reflective polarizer and said light generating means.

Support for the amendments to claim 1 (similarly, for claim 8), can be found in the specification at least on page 4, lines 31-33; page 5, lines 3-13; page 6, lines 13-34; and page 7, lines 1-31.

Claims 1, 2, 6-9, 13, and 14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Taira et al. (US 5,712,694). With respect to claims 2 and 9, the same have been canceled herein, thus rendering the rejection thereof moot. With respect to claim 1, Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection for at least the following reasons.

The PTO provides in MPEP § 2131 that

"[t]o anticipate a claim, the reference must teach every element of the claim...."

Therefore, with respect to claim 1, to sustain this rejection the Taira reference must contain all of the above claimed elements of the respective claims. However, contrary to the examiner's position that all elements are disclosed in the Taira reference, the latter reference does not disclose a "light efficiency increasing means ... wherein said light efficiency increasing means comprises a reflective polarizer arranged adjacent an end portion of the light guide and ... a retardation plate arranged between said reflective polarizer and said light generating means" as is claimed in claim 1.

In contrast, the display device of Taira teaches a light separating element comprising cholesteric liquid-crystal sheets, wherein responsive to non-polarized light incident on the light separating element of Taira, the light separating element separates the non-polarized light into two circularly-polarized light components. (See Taira at col. 15, lines 59-63). In addition, the light separating element of Taira includes a light converting element adjacent an end portion of light guide, the light converting element comprising a PVA quarter-wave film (See Taira at col. 17, lines 54-55). However, Taira does not teach or suggest the "light efficiency increasing means ... wherein said light efficiency increasing means comprises a reflective polarizer arranged adjacent an end portion of the light guide and ... a retardation plate arranged between said reflective polarizer and said light generating means" as is claimed in claim 1 of the present application.

Therefore, the rejection is not supported by the Taira reference and should be withdrawn.

Accordingly, claim 1 is allowable and an early formal notice thereof is requested.

Dependent claims 6-7 depend from and further limit independent claim 1 and therefore is allowable as well.

By this amendment, claim 8 has been amended in a similar manner with respect the amendments to claim 1. Claim 8 is believed allowable over the Taira reference for reasons similar as stated herein above with respect to overcoming the rejection of claim 1. Accordingly, claim 8 is believed allowable and the rejection thereof should be withdrawn. Dependent claims 13-14 depend from and further limit independent claim 8 and therefore is allowable as well.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 3-5 and 10-12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Taira et al (US 5,712,694). With respect to claims 3 and 10, the same have been canceled herein, thus rendering the rejection thereof moot. With respect to dependent claims 4-5 and 11-12, they depend from and further limit independent claims 1 and 8, respectively, and therefore are allowable as well. Accordingly, the 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejection thereof has now been overcome.

Conclusion

Except as indicated herein, the claims were not amended in order to address issues of patentability and Applicants respectfully reserve all rights they may have under the Doctrine of Equivalents. Applicants furthermore reserve their right to reintroduce subject matter deleted herein at a later time during the prosecution of this application or a continuation application.

It is clear from all of the foregoing that independent claims 1 and 8 are in condition for allowance. Dependent claims 4-7 and 11-14 depend from and further limit independent claims 1 and 8, respectively, therefore are allowable as well.

The amendments herein are fully supported by the original specification and drawings, therefore, no new matter is introduced. An early formal notice of allowance of claims 1, 4-8 and 11-14 is requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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ATTACHMENTS

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